



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, Florida 33701

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:

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September 7, 2012
FB12-064

Gulf of Mexico Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Program Participants in Portions of Louisiana Are Authorized to Use Paper-based Forms for Reporting through October 9, 2012

Hurricane Isaac made landfall in Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana, as a Category 1 hurricane on August 28, 2012. Strong winds and flooding from this hurricane impacted coastal communities throughout southeast Louisiana, resulting in power outages and damage to homes, businesses, and other infrastructure.

Regulations implementing the red snapper and grouper-tilefish IFQ programs provide for use of paper-based forms in the event that catastrophic conditions exist and IFQ participants cannot submit information electronically. These regulations require NOAA Fisheries Service to determine when catastrophic conditions exist, the duration of catastrophic conditions, and which participants or geographic areas are affected by the catastrophic conditions.

NOAA Fisheries Service has determined that catastrophic conditions exist in Lafourche, St. Bernard, Plaquemines, and Jefferson Parishes, Louisiana. NOAA Fisheries Service is authorizing red snapper and grouper-tilefish IFQ participants in the affected area to use paper-based forms for reporting through October 9, 2012. Notification to affected participants is being provided through this Fishery Bulletin, as well as notification in the *Federal Register*, via NOAA weather radio, and via federal port samplers and state agency personnel.

NOAA Fisheries Service has previously provided each IFQ dealer the necessary paper forms (sequentially coded) and instructions for reporting during catastrophic conditions. Paper forms are also available upon request by calling IFQ Customer Service at the phone number listed above or by writing:

NOAA Fisheries Service
Southeast Regional Office
Sustainable Fisheries Division
263 13th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701-5505

The electronic system for submitting information to NOAA Fisheries Service will continue to be available to all IFQ participants. Participants are encouraged to continue using the electronic system during catastrophic conditions if it is accessible.

The IFQ program functions available to participants in the geographic area affected by catastrophic conditions will be limited for those using the paper-based system. There will be no mechanism for transfers of IFQ shares or allocation for those using the paper-based system during catastrophic conditions.

Assistance in complying with the requirements of the paper-based system will be available via IFQ Customer Service 1-866-425-7627 Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Eastern time.